Allotment of railway land to railway employees for cultivation

1630. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government allot railway land to railway employees on license basis for cultivation;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the details of the railway land given for cultivation, so far;

(d) whether Government proposes to utilize such land for any other purpose to generate more revenues; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Railways have a policy to license vacant railway land not required for Railway's own use in the immediate future to its Group 'C' and 'D' category staff with preference to those belonging to SC/ST, OBC and weaker section of society in identified urban areas under Grow More Food (GMF) Scheme to prevent encroachment of its valuable land.

(c) Details are being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(d) and (e) The vacant railway land is required by Railways for its future development works. However, till such time, the land is required by Railways for its own operational use, the same is put to various short-term uses like commercial licensing, Grow More Food (GMF) Scheme, etc. In addition, where potential exists, it is proposed to undertake commercial development of railway land through Rail Land Development Authority (RLDA). A total of 129 sites on various Railways have been identified and entrusted to Rail Land Development Authority (RLDA) for commercial development for generation of more revenues.

Gauge conversion of Gujarat

1631. SHRI VIJAYKUMAR RUPANI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government of Gujarat has proposed for Gauge conversion of a number of lines;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) by when her Ministry is going to start gauge conversion; and

(d) what is the time-frame for planning and implementation of these projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) Yes. Sir. Government of Gujarat has requested for taking up new gauge conversion projects in Gujarat. The details and status of the proposed gauge conversions is as under:

Sl.No.	Proposal	Status
1.	Ahmedabad-Mehsana-Taranga-Ambaji	Survey for gauge conversion of Mahesana-Taranga hill with extension to Ambaji has been completed and proposal could not be considered due to its un-remunerative nature.
2.	Bhavnagar-Mahuva	It is already a broad gauge line.
3.	Ahmedabad-Botad-Bhavnagar and Dhasa-Jetalsar	Proposal for Ahmedabad-Botad and Dhasa-Jetalsar conversion was processed for "In Principle" approval of Planning Commission, who desired that the gauge conversion of the section may be deferred for the present as the projected traffic do not justify immediate conversion. Botad-Bhavnagar is already a broad gauge line.
4.	Wankarner-Bhuj-Naliya	A broad gauge line is already exists from Wankarner to Bhuj. The conversion of Bhuj-Naliya has been taken up.
5.	Narrow gauge railway lines under jurisdiction of Vadodara Railway Division.	Gauge conversion of Bharuch-Samni-Dahej. Pratapnagar-Chhotaudepur, Ankaleshwar-Rajpipla has been taken up.
6.	Viramgam-Samakhiali	It is already on broad gauge.
7.	Navlakhi-Maliya-Rajkot	It is already on broad gauge.
8.	Ahmedabad-Khedbrahma-Ambaji	The work on Ahmedabad- Himmatnagar has already been taken up as part of Ahmedabad-Udaipur conversion. The survey for Himmatnagar-Khedbrahma with extension to Abu Road has been taken up.
9.	Mahesana-Viramgam	It is already on broad gauge.
10.	Viramgam-Surendranagar	It is already on broad gauge.
11.	Samakhiali-Gandhidham-Kandla	It is already on broad gauge. The doubling of Gandhidham-Kandla Port by gauge conversion of meter gauge line to broad gauge has been included in Budget 2009-10.
12.	Gandhidham-Anjar-Mundra	It is already on broad gauge.
13.	Bahvnagar-Adhelal-Dholera-Vataman-Petlad	There is no such railway line.
14.	Dholera-Bhimnath	There is no such railway line.
15.	Khambhal to Port	There is no such railway line.

Request was also made to expedite ongoing gauge conversion projects. These projects are progressed as per availability of resources.

(c) The new works would be taken up as and when sanctioned.

(d) Does not arise.

More trains for South Central Railway

1632. SHRIMATI T. RATNA BAI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the trains running in the South Central Railway especially on the routes of Hyderabad-Visakhapatnam are insufficient and three more trains are required;

(b) if so, the comments of Government in this regard; and

(c) the steps being taken to run more trains in the route of SCR in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (c) Following additional services have been announced in the Railway Budget for 2009-10 which will serve the passengers on South Central Railway:

1. Vishakhapatnam-Secunderabad-Mumbai Express
2. Bilaspur-Tiruneveli Express
3. Hazrat Nizamuddin-Bangalore Rajdhani Express via Kacheguda
4. Lucknow-Rae Bareli-Bangalore Express
5. Howrah-Bangalore Express
6. Delhi-Secunderabad Express (Non stop)

The frequency of 7091/7092 Secunderabad-Patna Express will be increased from bi-weekly to daily and of 2739/2740 Secunderabad-Vishakhapatnam Express from four days a week to daily.

Price-rise of steel

1633. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) the price pattern of domestic steel during the last two years;

(b) whether it is a fact that the prices of steel has continued to rise despite lowering of price of critical raw material; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken by Government to contain this situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI A. SAI PRATHAP): (a) The price trend of a representative category of steel in the retail market of Delhi is given on a quarterly basis from June 2009 to June 2007 in the table below: